

NEWS from



Bill Postmus
Supervisor, 1st District

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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POSTMUS, COUNTY SEEK EXCLUSION OF 'MORNING-AFTER PILL'

SAN BERNARDINO—Approving a motion by First District Supervisor Bill Postmus, the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors today directed that the County seek a waiver from the Federal Department of Health and Human Services allowing the County to exclude the emergency contraceptive known as the “morning-after pill” from the range of federally funded family planning services provided at County health clinics.

Postmus was joined by Board Chairman and Fourth District Supervisor Fred Aguiar of Chino, Third District Supervisor Dennis Hansberger of Redlands, and Second District Supervisor Jon Mikels of Rancho Cucamonga in approving the motion.

The issue before the Supervisors was a contract with California Family Health Council, Inc., in the amount of \$457,722 for the provision of family planning services to low-income county residents for the calendar year 2001. The CFHC is a nonprofit organization designed by the Federal government as the administrator of funds provided by Title X of the Federal Public Health Services Act.

The item was continued at Supervisor Postmus' request February 27 pending staff research into legal and regulatory considerations relating to the distribution of the morning-after pill. Postmus objected to the fact that county health clinics have distributed such drugs to minors without parental consent—a practice that is allowed under state law.

Upon receiving advice from County Counsel Alan Marks this morning that state law requires that all contraceptive services be included in order for funding to be received, Supervisor Postmus made a motion that the County seek a waiver from the Federal government to allow the exclusion of the morning-after pill. The motion carried.

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"I believe parents have a right to know when their minor children are being given prescription drugs—especially contraceptive services which signal a variety of issues parents should be addressing with their children," Postmus said.

"If our schools can't even give aspirin to a student without parental consent, why should this be different?" Postmus asked.

The Board also directed that pending any response from the Federal government the contract be approved. Supervisors Postmus and Aguiar opposed that motion, which carried with Supervisors Hansberger, Jerry Eaves and Jon Mikels voting in favor.